

A case for Voice

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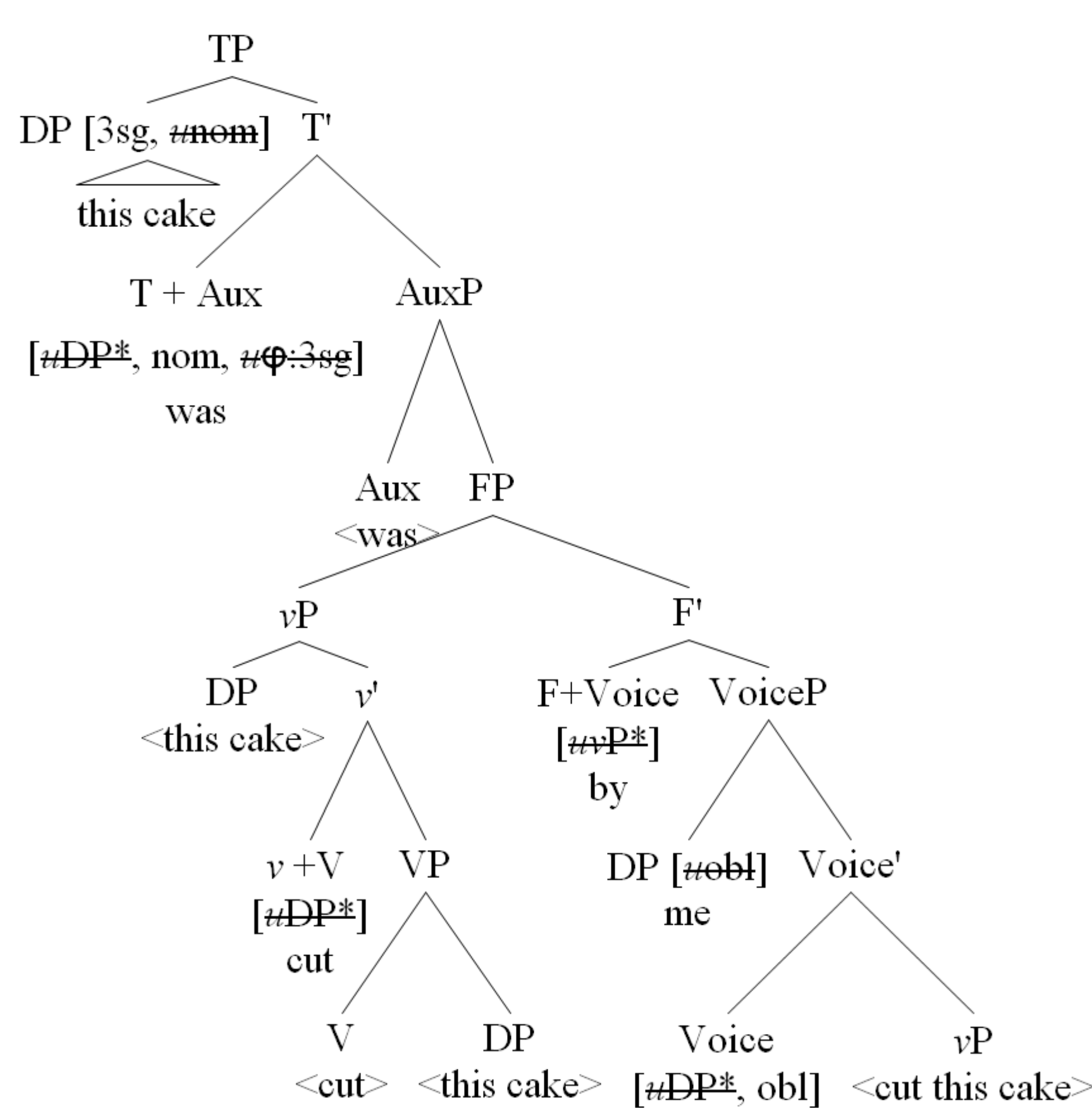
Overview

We propose that the cross-linguistic similarities and differences illustrated in (1)-(5) are best captured in an approach that combines aspects of Sailor & Ahn's (2010) analysis of passives with ergative-like case marking and case-driven DP-movement.

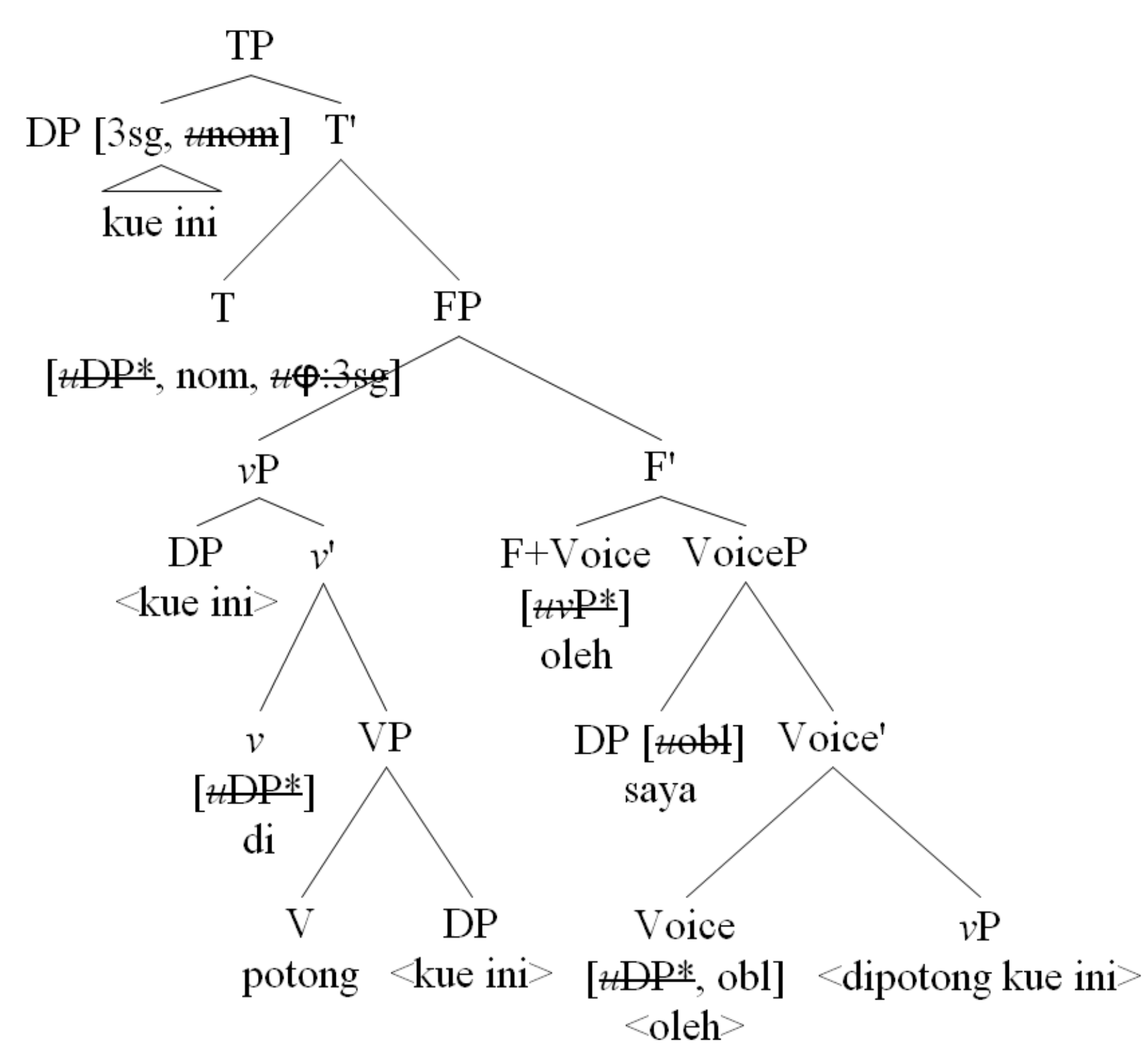
- (1) [This cake] was cut **by** *me*.
- (2) [kue ini] dipotong **oleh** *saya*. (Indonesian *di*-passive)
- (3) [zhe he dangao] **bei** *wo* qie le. (Chinese passive)
- (4) [kono keeki-ga] *watashi-niyotte* kirareta. (Japanese direct passive)
- (5) [kue ini] *saya* potong. (Indonesian inverse)

Following Sailor & Ahn, we assume that external arguments are merged in SpecVoiceP, due to a [*uDP**] feature on Voice. The voice marker is merged in Voice, but moves to the head of a higher functional projection in (1)-(3). To account for the position of the verb, we assume with Sailor & Ahn that Voice also has a [*uvP*] feature, which attracts *vP* to the Spec of the higher functional projection when it is strong, and thus moves the verb across the external argument (1)-(2). In (3)-(5), this feature is weak and the *vP* remains in final position. In order to account for the movement of the internal argument to initial position regardless of whether the *vP* moves (1)-(2) or not (3)-(5), we follow Béjar & Rezac (2009:68) in assuming that the EPP (= *uDP**) feature on T is linked to the operation Agree, more specifically, the checking and valuing of ϕ - and case-features. We propose that passivisation not only suppresses the structural [acc] case on Voice, but also endows Voice with the ability to assign an oblique inherent case to the external argument in its specifier (cf. Woolford 2006). This means that T will Agree with the internal argument, and as a result the EPP feature on T, which is strong in all four languages, will attract the internal argument to SpecTP.

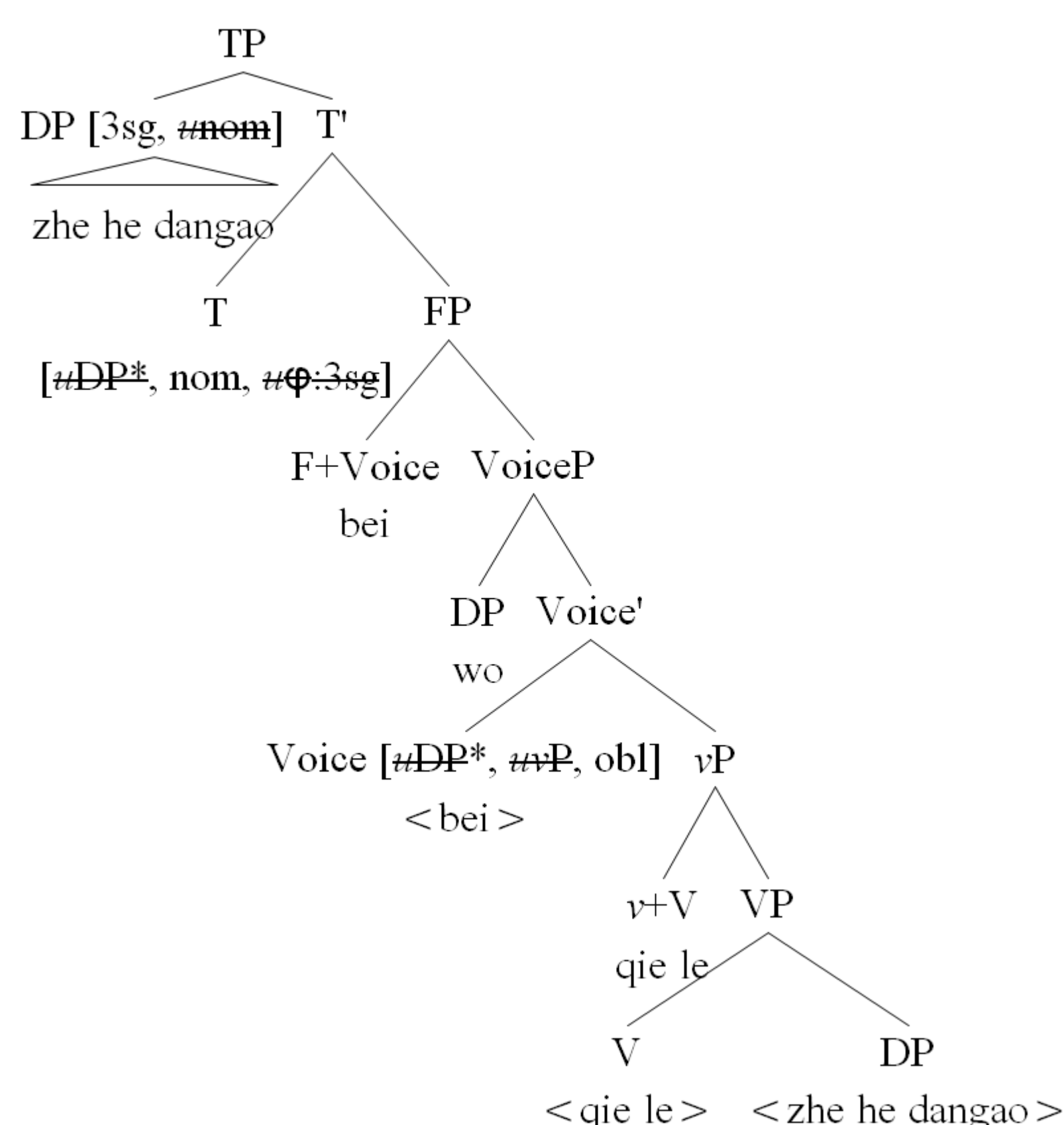
Tree 1: English passive



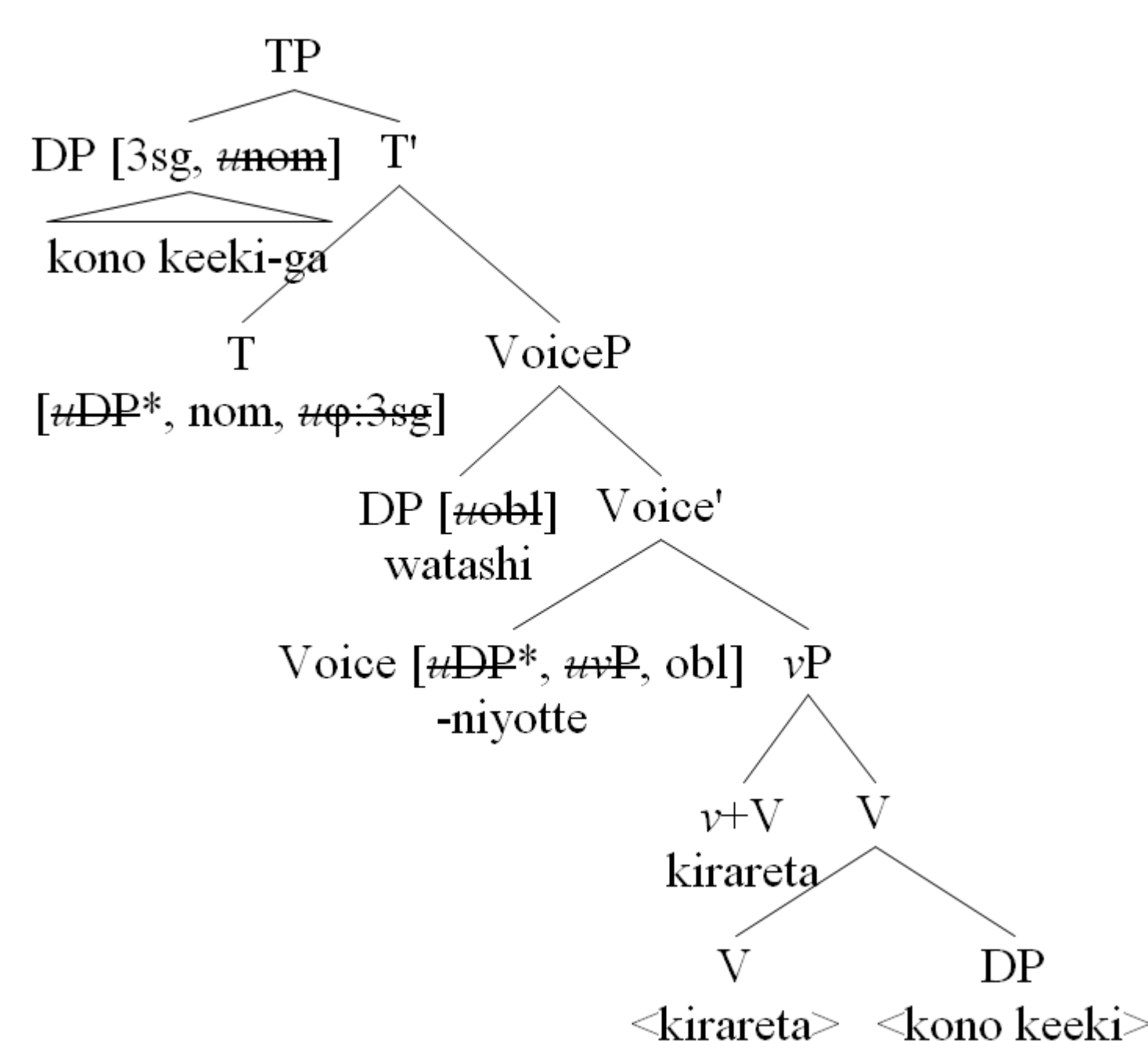
Tree 2: Indonesian *di*-passive



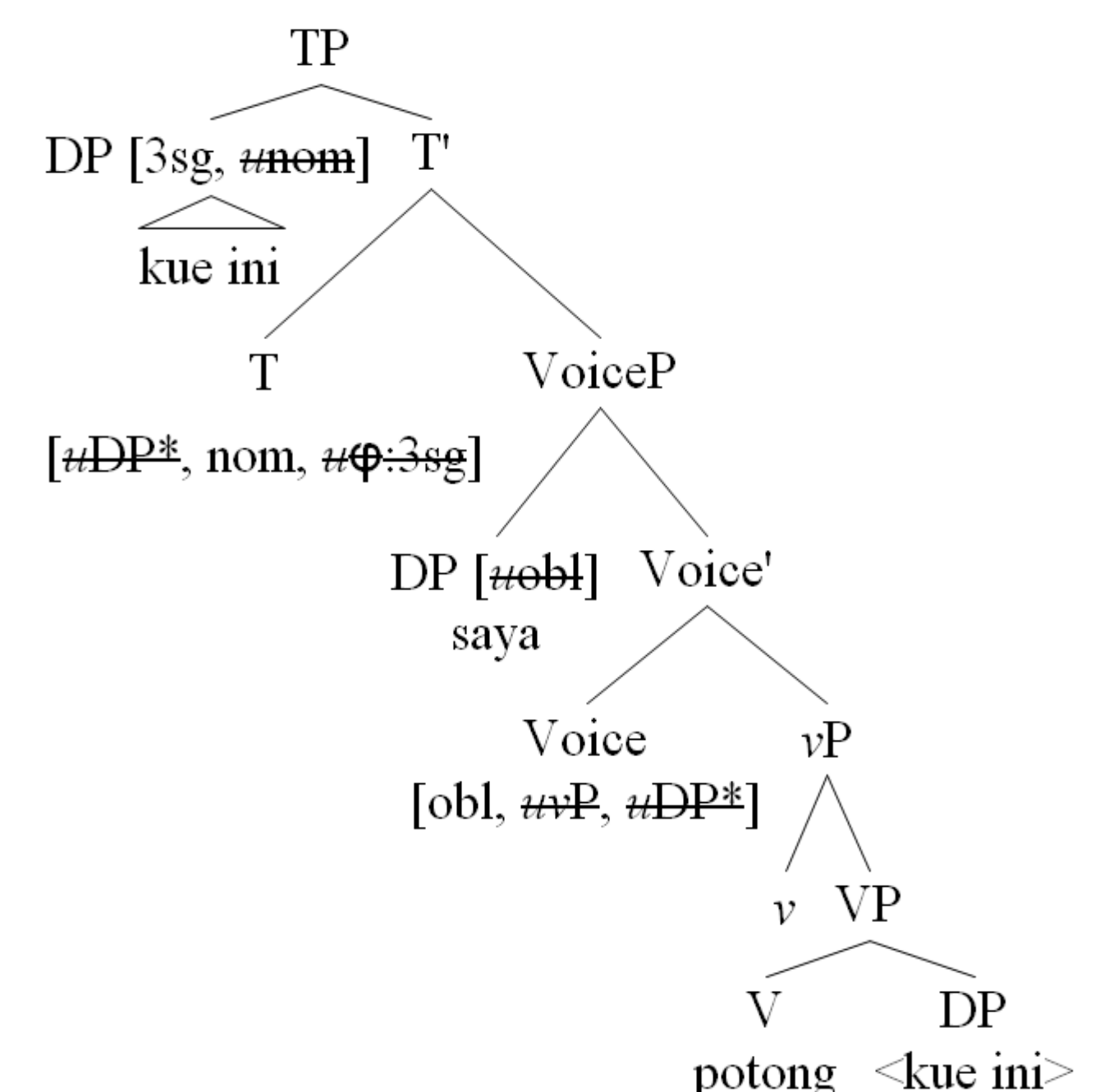
Tree 3: Chinese passive



Tree 4: Japanese passive



Tree 5: Indonesian inverse



References

- Béjar, Susana and Milan Rezac. 2009. Cyclic Agree. *Linguistic Inquiry* 40. 35-73.
- Sailor, Craig and Byron Ahn. 2010. The voices in our heads: morphological voice and its grammatical interfaces. Ms, UCLA Department of Linguistics.
(<http://byron.bol.ucla.edu/papers/SailorAhn-VoiceP.pdf>)
- Woolford, Ellen. 2006. Lexical case, inherent case, and argument structure. *Linguistic Inquiry* 37. 111-130.